

A THREE-MINUTES' COMEDY.

SCENE—A room in a country house.

CHARACTERS.

Jack (25). Florence (20).

Jack. So you'll be in town all day to-morrow?

Florence. Yes—shopping. Anything I can do for you?

J. No—that is—ah, but it would be giving you too much trouble, Miss VIVIAN.

F. That depends, doesn't it? If it's a gun, or anything of that sort—

J. (hastily). Do you think I'd ask a girl to choose a—er, no—it's nothing of that sort. It's—it's a bit of jewellery, in fact.

F. What sort of bit?

J. Well, the fact is, it's a *present*—a really nice diamond brooch, I rather thought of. But if you could choose it, I should be sure it was right.

F. (with a slight flush). Very polite of you to say so. May I ask why?

J. Well, because you know her—that is, my friend's—taste. I'm sure you do.

F. (to herself, triumphantly). He does mean it for me! (Aloud) A diamond brooch? But they're not cheap, you know.

J. No; but then this is—is a *special* sort of occasion, you see—kind of thing that only comes once in a lifetime—don't you agree?

F. (to herself). He's going to at last—and what a delightful way of doing it! (Aloud, with an effort, not quite successful, at serenity) And you've quite decided on diamonds? Suppose one—suppose she—your friend, I mean,—preferred sapphires?

J. No, it had better be diamonds. Don't think she cares for sapphires.

F. (eagerly). But she *does*, indeed she does!

J. Fancy not, really. Heard her say by chance about a month ago that she thought sapphires unlucky.

F. (gasping). Heard *who* say?

J. Why, MARY ACTON. It's for her that I want the brooch. Surely you guessed that?

F. Yes, yes—of course I did. Of course. But—but on second thoughts—I think I'd rather you—you chose it yourself.

J. (much puzzled, dimly conscious that something is wrong). Oh, I don't want to give you any trouble, Miss VIVIAN—still, as you kindly offered to undertake a commission for me in town—

F. (having recovered herself, coldly). Very well. But do you want it to-morrow?

J. No hurry for a week or so—or even a month. But the wedding's to be in February, and—



FOOLS AND THEIR MONEY—

Jones (who has been having a fair bucketing for the last half-hour, as he passes friend, in his mad career). "I'D GIVE A FIVER TO GET OFF THIS BRUTE!"

Friend (brutally). "DON'T CHUCK YOUR MONEY AWAY, OLD CHAP! YOU'LL BE OFF FOR LESS THAN THAT!"

F. (in amazement). The wedding?

J. Yes, MARY ACTON's wedding to DICK GRAHAM. Didn't you see the announcement in the *Morning Post* to-day?

F. (tremulously). No—I didn't—I thought for a moment—

J. (to himself). By Jove—she really does care and—take the chance, man—now or never! (Aloud) Miss VIVIAN—if you really wouldn't mind—there is another piece of jewellery—I should love to give—to—er, to someone rather nearer than Miss ACTON—and if I might choose it with you—FLORENCE? . . .

F. JACK!

(Quick curtain.)

PROFESSOR WHELIUM RAMSAY is to lecture at the Californian University on Radium and gases generally, and on anything else that may be "in the air" discoverable between now and summertime. It is said that the eminent Professor has invented a new and "more excellent way" of grilling psammon for breakfast. This is indeed valuable.

Prevented Suicide of a Duke.

"THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER shot the preserves at Eaton Hall last week. The Duke was unable to shoot himself owing to his recent hunting accident."—*Weekly Irish Times*.

FRAGMENT OF AN EPIC OF THE UNDERGROUND.

[A humble admirer and imitator of the author of the *Epic of Hades*, having had his attention called to certain recent confessions of the Statesman-Poet, in which he admitted that he had composed portions of that masterpiece on the Underground Railway, has attempted to follow his example, with the deplorable results set forth below.]

So from beneath the tower
Of that great Senate House, which he erewhile,
The pride of Wales, Sir LEWIS MORRIS, Bard,
Proposed to enter, on the Liberal plank,
But changed his dreadful purpose and was made
A knight for guerdon, lo! I passed within
The darkling gloom of Westminster Bridge Station,
Having the frenzy on me. Here, methought,
Where more than elsewhere on the District Rail
Mephitic vapours counterfeit the clime
Of Hades, I shall find the atmosphere
Suited to *Orpheus and Eurydice*,
My topic for the day. The ticket man
Handed me, by request, a third return
To Gloucester Road, for which I paid the fee
Marked legibly thereon. Adown the stairs
Two at a time with winged feet I swept,
And caught a London and North-Western train
Such as connects with Hyperborean lines
At Willesden Junction.

Partly for the sake
Of inspiration sucked from deadlier fumes,
And partly in the certain hope to mix
With female passengers, some one of whom
Might serve as model for *Eurydice*,
I chose a smoking carriage. In the hurry
My choice was careless, and I chanced to light
On a compartment of superior class,
Whose occupants numerically touched
The Muses' level, five upon the left,
Four on the right hand, women every one,
Myself the submerged tenth. Straight I surmised
That from some meeting at the Mansion House
They were returning, since their talk was loud
Of petticoats designed for heathen hips,
But nowise reminiscent of the Nine
Pierides.

Finding it in the way,
I slung my lyre upon the rack reserved
For light impedimenta, where it made
Æolian music, owing to the draught.
But scarce, in these distracting circumstances,
Had I composed beyond a score of lines
Broadly embodying the nymph's regrets,
Like this:—"Excuse me, dear, that I forgot
That silly rule about the backward glance
And thus upset our mutual apple-cart"—
And so forth—ere we reach the ensuing station,
St. James's Park, where passengers alight
For that depressing block of buildings named
From our Queen ANNE, deceased. And lo! the door
Yawned to admit a mother and her babe.
And all the latent manhood in me rose
To give them place; which they at once accepted.
So, wedged between opposing knees I stood
Until the shock of starting flung me prone
Across a picture hat; whereon the babe
Let loose an instant peal of pure delight.
But I, recovering all my feet, stood up
And mused again of Hell.

Yet not so soon
Could that elusive rapture be re-caught;
And I admit that I had barely framed

Some further dozen lines when a great voice
That cried "Victoria! Victoria!"
Brought back to me the Master's Jubilee Ode.
And, while that memory thrilled me through and
through,
A second jerk, caused this time by the brake,
Projected me, as from a catapult,
On an adjoining lap.

A second spasm
Convulsed the babe. But even as I rose,
Breathing inspired apologies, the door
Opened, and an inspector entered in
And asked to see my ticket. Not Actseon,
When the sleuth-hounds fell on him where he watched
Diana's mysteries from behind a tree,
Felt such a poignant shame as I, being found
A lonely male, and in an attitude
Not all uncompromising, as it seemed,
And made to pay the difference between
Second and third-class fare.

This done, anon,
I clutching at the rack wherein my lyre
Still fitfully discoursed Æolian airs,
The train proceeded

[Editor. Can't you stop here?

Author. If you insist. But you must bear the responsibility.

Editor. With pleasure.]

O. S.

MR. PUNCH'S SPECTRAL ANALYSES.

XI.—THE THIN END OF THE WEDGE.

"I BEG you," said the Headless Man with some agitation,
"not to dream of doing such a thing. Of course, if you
think that I am unequal to the work—" he added rather
stiffly.

"My dear Sir," I replied, "not at all. Not at all. What
a notion! I am sure there is not a spectre on the list who
could do it half so well, and what the Haunted Mill would
be without you I don't care to think."

"Then why wish to employ another ghost?"

"I thought you would like a companion. It must be lonely
for you here when I am away."

"I miss you, of course, as who would not?" replied the
Headless Man in his charming way. "But I prefer solitude
to the company of another ghost. Take my advice, Mr.
WUDDUS. Dismiss the idea of increasing your establishment."

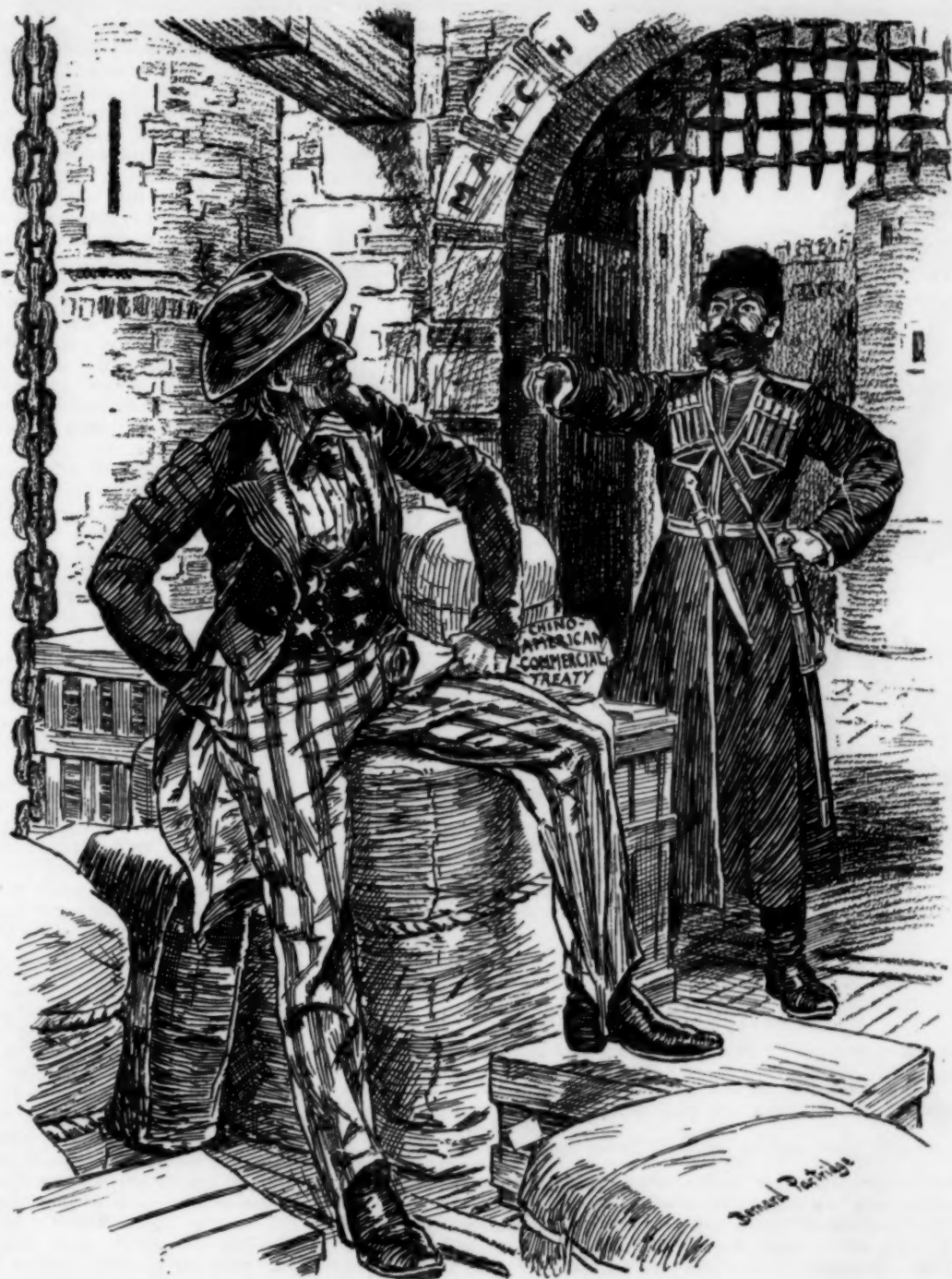
The trouble was this. My old friend Lord SANGAZURE,
finding it necessary, owing to the expenses connected with
the marriage of his eldest daughter, to retrench, had resolved
to dismiss one of his staff of spectres, a luminous boy of
excellent character and obliging disposition. Wishing to
procure him a comfortable home in exchange for the luxury
of Sangazure Towers, he had written to me, suggesting that
I should enrol him as a member of my household. "You
must want a ghost," he had said, having evidently forgotten
that I already employed a Headless Man.

I felt a delicacy in adding to my establishment without
the approval of the Headless Man, so I had told him of Lord
SANGAZURE's proposal, which, as I have shown, he had unhesi-
tatingly condemned.

"Dismiss the idea," he said again. "I have a great respect
—and I may say liking—for you, Mr. WUDDUS" (here he
brushed away the not unmanly tear), "and I should not care
to see you suffer the same fate as Mr. MOSENSTEIN."

"What was that?" I inquired; "I don't think I ever
heard that story."

"Ah, then I will tell it to you. You will find it extremely
relevant to the case in point. This Mr. MOSENSTEIN was a



NOT TO BE DRAWN.

RUSSIAN OCCUPIER (*on sufferance*). "HI! YOU THERE! WE WANT THIS DRAWBRIDGE UP!"

UNCLE SAM. "SORRY, BUT I'VE JUST GOTTEN THE PROPRIETOR'S PERMISSION TO SIT ON IT."

[In face of strong opposition from Russia, the Emperor of CHINA has ratified a commercial treaty with the United States, by which certain Manchurian towns are opened to American trade.]



LET TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours very truly,
J. H. HARRIS, Secretary.

"pig in clover," who, by dint of rigging the market, had risen from comparatively decent obscurity to the possession of several millions of pounds. His first act was to ensure himself a sufficiency of congenial society by settling in Park Lane, his second to look for a good house in the country. He hit upon Blenkinsop Manor, the seat of Lord BLENKINSOP, an amiable old gentleman who, through a tendency on the part of his sons to marry music-hall artistes instead of American heiresses, had been reduced to a genteel poverty. Lord BLENKINSOP closed with his munificent offer, and Mr. MOSENSTEIN took possession. Of course, as you will doubtless have foreseen, he had trouble from the outset with the resident ghost. The latter, I have heard, gave notice five times in the first week, and it was only the entreaties of Mr. MOSENSTEIN, couched in passionate Yiddish, and the tears of Mrs. MOSENSTEIN, that induced him to stop on and give them one more trial. It was a fatal move on the part of the new owner. The spectre became a tyrant. He insisted on having a suite of apartments reserved for him, dismissed several of the servants, examined every list of guests, and claimed the right to veto those of whom he disapproved. In fact, Mosenstein Manor, as it had been re-named, became a sort of lodging-house—in which the MOSENSTEINS were the lodgers. It was only the fear of losing their ghost that prevented the newcomers from rebelling. So things went on, until one day Mr. MOSENSTEIN, retiring to his study for a last cigar before going to bed, found the best chair already occupied. The occupant was a spectre. He was sitting in front of the fire, reading the *Spectral News*. He looked up as Mr. MOSENSTEIN entered, but resumed his reading without a word. The lord of the Manor smoked his cigar in the billiard-room.

"A friend of mine," explained the resident ghost, on being questioned next day. "He has come to stop for a few days. I trust he does not intrude? If so—" He paused, and looked so much as if he were going to give notice again that Mr. MOSENSTEIN hastened to say that he was charmed to put up any friend of his, and hoped he would stop as long as he liked. Which, I may say, he did. He is still there. It was the thin edge of the wedge. During the next fortnight six other spectres arrived, and each time Mr. MOSENSTEIN was forced to give in and assure them that they were welcome. Soon there was quite a spectral house-party at the Manor. And it was not long before the human occupants of the house began to feel the pinch of the boot. Mr. MOSENSTEIN was not allowed to go into his study, because the ghost there hated



A HUMANE INSTINCT.

Snob (who has been making himself very objectionable). "I SAY, WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR GAME?"

Host. "GIVE MY FRIENDS WHAT THEY WANT, AND SEND THE REST TO MARKET."

Snob. "AH, SELL IT, DO YOU? WITH MY GAME, DON'TERKNOW, I GIVE MY FRIENDS SOME, AND SEND THE REST TO THE HOSPITALS."

Host. "AND VERY NATURAL AND PROPER, I'M SURE. THE ONLY THING I'VE SEEN YOU SHOOT TO-DAY WAS A BEATER!"

to be disturbed. He could not use the billiard-room because two gentlemen who had killed one another there in the reign of HENRY THE SIXTH wanted the table for their nightly three rounds with the broadsword. All the best bedrooms had to be given up, and even the terrace was occupied. And, not wishing to lose his original ghost, Mr. MOSENSTEIN had to put up with it all.

To cut a long story short, when he visits Mosenstein Manor now, he stays at the Lodge; and I see in the *Spectral News* this week that even that is about

to be taken—as a bijou residence for the Countess of BLENKINSOP, who poisoned herself there in the days of the Commonwealth. So now you see the danger of having more than one ghost. One spectre," concluded the Headless Man, sententiously, "is an indispensable adjunct to domestic bliss. Two are a nuisance. Half-a-dozen spell Misery."

And, settling his head comfortably under his arm, he vanished. I went downstairs, and wrote to Lord SANGAZURE informing him—with regret—that I had no vacancy.

MY POCKET MASCOT.

NEVER could make out why I've always been a failure so far. Now I see it all! It isn't because I was *born* unlucky—but simply because I've been doing things at times which, for me, were the *wrong* ones! Have discovered this from little work called *Fortunatae*; or, *The Pocket Mascot* (price 1s. net). Everybody's proper planetary table, all worked out by Chaldean astrologers of old. By sending name and particulars of precise date of my birth—which, fortunately, I happen to know—I have obtained extra edition of *Mascot* (price 5s. net), with special Chart filled in with my lucky and unlucky colours, stones, numbers, days, weeks, months, best and worst hours for business, speculation, and, in fact, everything. Ought to have a successful year at last!

January.—Circular at breakfast from German State lottery. Just about to pitch it into fire, when it occurred to me to consult *Mascot*. Chart says between 9 and 10 to-day is my "lucky hour for receiving business proposals." Send cheque for twenty tickets at once. And to think that, but for *Pocket Mascot*, I should have let the chance of a lifetime slip through my fingers!

February.—Obliged to give my landlady notice. Most reluctant to leave; very comfortable rooms, central position, and moderate rent—but no help for it. Just heard that local authorities are changing the numbering. Mine is to be No. 9 in future, instead of 52. Nine, according to Chart, is my unlucky number—so of course, as a matter of ordinary prudence, must clear out at once.

March.—Tiring work hunting for lodgings. Thought I had found the very thing, when I happened to notice—only just in time—that front of house was painted Pompeian red, my unlucky colour. Deuced narrow escape! Got rooms at last—dear, and dirty, and landlady looks as if she drank. However, curtains and furniture in sitting-room bright green—which is my lucky colour—and the number is 17, so I was sharp enough to secure them for a year. Can't think how people can get on without a *Pocket Mascot*.

April.—Should like to find some regular occupation—at least till anything happens to dear old Uncle GOLDBEGGER. Hear of vacancy in leading Insurance Office. Old POSTLETHWAITE a director of the Company—any nominee of his bound to get the berth. Always been uncommonly friendly to me. Why not look him up and ask him to use his influence? Must consult Special Chart as to my "best hour for paying visits and asking favours." Find it is from 1 to 2 A.M. Chaldean astrologers seem to have been a rather unconventional lot of old Johnnies—still, hang it all, they *must* know best! Got to Prince's Gate a little after one in the morning. Butler long time in opening door. Shown into library with fire out. Old POSTLETHWAITE appearing, after an interval, in dressing-gown—having apparently been to bed. Hopes I am not the bearer of any bad news. Reassure him, and explain object of call. Sorry to disturb him, but this positively the only time I *could* pay him a visit. Left him comparatively calm, and fancy that, after sleeping on it, he will see that I'm just the man for the post.

May.—Singularity enough, some other fellow got the berth. Can't understand it, as Chart indicated 1 A.M. as my planetary hour. But perhaps it wasn't Old POSTLETHWAITE's.

Really splendid offer by four o'clock post. Secretaryship of smart Club; pleasant duties, good salary; several old pals working for me on committee—merely to say the word, and I may consider thing settled! Still, it never does to be too precipitate in business matters. See what *Pocket Mascot* advises. There now, just shows how necessary caution is! Special Chart distinctly says: "Proposals of new work which arrive in the hours of four and five *must be avoided*." Wrote to decline; better give no reasons—they wouldn't understand.

June.—Wire from Uncle GOLDBEGGER. "Feeling very unwell. Come at once." He's always fancying he's going to die—but he never *does*. Still, of course I must go. Very annoying, though, because I particularly wanted to go to that dance at the DESBOROUGHs to-morrow evening. *ETHEL* promised to keep two waltzes for me. However, look up trains. According to *Bradshaw*, only one train—at 11.45. Just time to catch it. Mustn't run any risks, though. Where's the *Mascot*? "Avoid travel any day this week." Then that *settles* it! If I *did* go, there'd only be a collision or something, and I shouldn't reach him after all. Wire back "regretting impossible leave town at present." Very disappointing—but quite sure dear old Uncle wouldn't wish me to get smashed up in a railway accident—he'd have nobody to leave all his money to, then!

Just back from the DESBOROUGHs' dance. I'm the happiest man in the whole world! *ETHEL* looking so lovely that I couldn't resist asking her to be mine after supper. And she has accepted me! No idea she was an heiress, but from what BUNBURY said in congratulating me it appears she will have five thousand a year on her marriage. Not that it signifies. Whenever anything does happen to Uncle G., I shall have at least as much. Darling *ETHEL*! when I think that at this precise moment two hours ago—I am certain of the time, because I glanced at the clock as we were leaving the supper room, and it couldn't have been more than five minutes later that I— By the way, I wonder if I proposed in the planetary hour? Refer to Chart. . . . What have I done? By foolishly neglecting to consult table beforehand, I've chosen the very worst hour for *any* purpose! My time for wooing, it seems, is 8 P.M. Awkward doing it just as we're going down to dinner, but I suppose those old Chaldean fossils dined early. What am I to do *now*? Can't possibly expose the poor girl and myself to lifelong misery! Write and ask her to consider proposal as never having been made—say I will call to-morrow at 8 P.M. and explain reasons. Then I can propose all over again and put things right . . .

Poor dear old Uncle—so it *was* serious after all! Sorry I couldn't be with him at the last, but useless to fly in the face of Chaldean astrology. I'm sure he must have understood how it was. I wonder how much—but I never *was* mercenary—let me think only of my loss. This will be something to tell *ETHEL* this evening. I must buy an engagement ring to take with me. Wish she had a prettier lucky stone than sardonyx.

July.—Can't make *ETHEL* out! Have called three times—always at planetary hour—and she's never been at home *once*! I suppose a *Pocket Mascot* can't possibly be mistaken—not the 5s. net edition, anyhow—still, there it is! And she hasn't answered my letters either—except to return them unopened.

August.—German lottery turned up trumps after all. *Knew* it would! Letter informing me that I've won a prize of a hundred marks! Regulations peculiar, though. The hundred marks paid in tickets for next drawing, provided I send another £5 by return—otherwise the whole lot forfeited.

Worst of it is that I haven't a psychological hour for accepting business proposals till day after to-morrow!

September.—Uncle GOLDBEGGER's will in morning paper. Personality sworn at £250,000—rather more than I expected—will dated immediately before his death—don't seem to see my name anywhere—residue left in equal shares to Home for Lost Dogs and Home of Rest for Horses. Now what *could* have induced him to make such a will as that?

October.—Feeling very, very low and depressed. It's not only that this week's *World* contains announcement of *ETHEL*'s engagement to BUNBURY. That's bad enough—but even a worse thing has happened to me! I really don't know how I'm to get through the rest of the year—I've lost my "*Pocket Mascot*"!!!

F. A.

VIVE LA RUSSIE?

Un café du Boulevard. M. DURAND, M. DUPONT, et M. DUBOIS entrent.

Dubois. Mettons-nous là, à l'abri du courant d'air. Qu'est-ce que vous prenez, DURAND? Quelquechose de russe, du *vodka*? Toujours russophile? Vive la Russie! Hein?

Dupont. Eh bien, que dites-vous des affaires au Japon?

Durand. Ah ça! Sont-ils embêtants, ces Japonais!

Dubois. Et cependant, mon cher, vous qui êtes toujours l'ami des peuples héroïques, vous devez être l'ami des Japonais.

Durand. Jamais de la vie! Vive la nation amie et alliée!

Dubois. Y compris les Finlandais, les Polonais, les Chinois, et les autres?

Durand. Vous vous moquez toujours de la politique russe. C'est un grand peuple.

Dubois. Lequel? Le peuple finlandais?

Durand. Ah, bah! Vos Finlandais! Je m'en fiche. Ce sont des révoltés, des révolutionnaires.

Dubois. En effet, ils pourraient devenir des républicains tout tranquilles, comme vous et moi.

Dupont. Qui est donc ce grand peuple?

Durand. Mais les Russes, naturellement. Quel pays, quel peuple, quelle littérature! Figurez-vous MAXIM GORKY—

Dupont. Qu'est-ce que c'est que ça? Encore une liqueur russe?

Durand. Et Tolstoi!

Dupont. J'en ai entendu parler. C'est un écrivain polonais, n'est-ce pas?

Dubois. Ou finlandais.

Durand. C'est le plus grand écrivain du monde.

Dubois. Vous avez lu tout ce qu'il a écrit? Ça ne finit jamais. C'est ennuyant à n'y pas croire. *La Guerre et la Paix*, vous avez lu tout ça? Et *Anna Karénine*?

Durand. C'est un chef-d'œuvre.

Dubois. Parfaitement. Mais l'avez-vous lu?

Durand. Je l'ai commencé. C'est superbe.

Dubois. Mais vous ne l'avez pas fini. Je l'aurais parié. Tous ses livres sont interminables. On dirait des *steppes*.

Dupont. Eh bien, je suis à peu près de l'avis de DURAND. Seulement j'espère que nous autres Français—

Dubois. Que nous n'allons pas nous battre. Ah, pour sûr! Et cependant, si les Anglais—

Durand. Les Anglais? Mais ça ne les regarde pas.

Dubois. Mais si. Voilà une impasse presque ridicule! Les Anglais et les Français sont à présent si bons amis.



EXTREME MEASURES.

Mother. "If I catch you chasing those HENS again, I'll wash your FACE EVERY DAY NEXT WEEK!"

Serons-nous forcés d'attaquer l'Ile de Wight, ou de voir la flotte anglaise à Cherbourg, pour faire plaisir à ces Asiatiques, qui se coupent la gorge dans l'Extrême-Orient? Sont-ils des Asiatiques, vos chers amis! Grattez le Russe et vous trouvez—le civilisateur de la Finlande. Quelle jolie façon de commencer le nouvel an! Et tout ça après avoir installé ces vieux bonshommes à La Haye pour nous empêcher de nous battre.

Dupont. C'est bien vrai ce que vous dites là.

Durand. En effet, je n'avais pas pensé à ça.

Dubois. Et puis, pendant que nous autres Anglais et Français sommes aux prises, étant toujours bons amis, les Allemands, qu'est-ce qu'ils vont faire? Croyez-vous que ces milliers d'hommes resteront plantés là tout paisiblement?

Durand. Je n'avais pas pensé à ça non plus.

Dubois. Eh bien, pensez-y. Et en même temps vendez vos rentes russes, si vous en avez.

Durand. Comment? Mes 4%, qui sont déjà en baisse?

Dubois. Mais oui. Si la guerre éclate, croyez-vous que vos chers amis les Russes, toujours à sec, auront un seul kopek à gaspiller en payant votre petit revenu?

Dupont. DUBOIS a raison, mon cher DURAND. Etes-vous toujours du même avis? Vive la Russie, hein?

Durand. Ah non! La guerre partout, même chez nous; les Allemands à Nancy, peut-être à Fontainebleau; des impôts encore plus effroyables; mes 4% perdus? Mille fois non! Je crie de tout mon cœur—

Dubois. Vive la Russie?

Durand. Non, je vous dis. Vive la Paix! *[Ils sortent.]*

Parsifal at Bayreuth.

Mr. Punch desires to contradict the assertion, recently made in his pages, that the performances of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth are a source of financial profit to Frau WAGNER. Frau WAGNER, he is assured, makes no personal profit whatever out of the Bayreuth Festival. To her therefore he offers his best apologies.

MR. PUNCH'S SYMPOSIA.

IX.—WHY ARE WE SO RUDE?

SCENE—*The Saloon of the Turbine Channel steamer. The French Coast receding in the distance.*

PRESENT:

Lord Avebury (in the Chair).

Mr. Paul Cambon.

Mr. J. E. C. Bodley.

Mr. Andrew Lang.

Mr. Hayden Coffin.

Mr. George Alexander.

Mr. H. B. Marriott Watson.

Ahmed Madralli (the Terrible Turk).

Mr. Charles Manners.

Lord Avebury. The exquisite hospitality we have received during our stay in France only brings home to us more fully the sense of our own imperfections. I propose that we devote the transit—bereft of its horrors and converted into one of the pleasures of life by the triumph of science—to a discussion of the question, "Why are we, as a nation, so rude?" or, in other words, can we become more polite?

Mr. Andrew Lang. Why should we?

Mr. J. E. C. Bodley. Only those who have studied the French nation on the spot, as I have, can realise the immense gulf that exists between the manners of France and the manners of England. Even among the poorest, while, for example, the street boy of London would be advising you to get your hair cut, the gamin of Paris is placing his coat in a puddle that you may keep your boots clean.

Mr. Hayden Coffin. It was an Englishman, Sir WALTER RALEIGH, who taught him that trick, anyway.

Mr. Bodley. No. "I have the best reason for believing that RALEIGH acquired the pretty action from a French polisher.

Mr. Marriott Watson. There is no doubt that we lack manners, particularly, perhaps, when we travel. But what can you expect when the hand that ought to be rocking the cradle and ruling the world is brandishing the hockey-stick?

Mr. Paul Cambon (the French Ambassador). But why, if I may ask, alter things at all? The Englishman is valued because he is an Englishman. Why denationalise him in order to gain a little unimportant urbanity?

Mr. Hayden Coffin. Not unimportant, surely? An easy address, a pleasant voice, and a gallant pose, are possessions which every man should strive to acquire, no matter how often he has to visit *The Country Girl* to take lessons.

Mr. George Alexander. St. James has, I venture to assert, as good manners as St. Denys, and vastly better trousers.

Lord Avebury. The fact remains, I

fear, that Englishmen travelling abroad too seldom take into consideration their position as strangers in a hospitable house. When in Rome, it used to be said, one should do as the Romans do. Similarly, when in Paris, if I may be pardoned the somewhat audacious paraphrase, one should do as the Parisians do. For instance, we should make a point of conforming to the unwritten laws of dress that govern the Opera, and not push to our seats in suits of dittoes.

Mr. George Alexander. Might it not depend a little on how the dittoes were cut and pressed?

Lord Avebury. I fear not.

Mr. Marriott Watson. My contention is that the fault primarily is with the women. If our mothers are eternally in the hockey field, how can we be properly instructed in manners or anything else?

Mr. Bodley. I think the evil is more deeply seated than my gifted confrère seems to imagine. Generations back French writers commented adversely on the *morgue Britannique*.

Mr. Andrew Lang. Surely you don't want to import the Parisian *Morgue*?

Lord Avebury. I think it is generally conceded that we have much to learn, but the question is, from whom? For my own part, speaking as a sedulous apiarist, I think that we might take a leaf or two from the book of the bee. Nothing could be more courtly than the obeisance with which they greet their Queen. Loth as I am to indulge in a play upon words, and even more loth to mispronounce the king's English, I am yet disposed to remark that if we wish to learn how to beehive we must go to the apiary.

Mr. Bodley. Or to France.

Lord Avebury. True. French manners are charming. Many times as I have visited that pleasant country, I have never yet heard a Frenchman say "Rats."

Mr. Andrew Lang. The decay of manners is largely due to the corrupting influence of the New Humour, which I regret to see even our Chairman has not escaped.

Lord Avebury. But surely, Mr. LANG, you would not deny the humanising effect of letters, or repudiate your brothers of the quill?

Mr. Andrew Lang. On the contrary, I am always ready to fall on their necks—with a hatchet.

Mr. Marriott Watson. There is nothing wrong that I can see with men's manners. It is women—and, above all, American women—who are to blame. *Delenda est Chicago.*

Mr. Hayden Coffin. I am not here to defend the sex, but I cannot sit still and listen to aspersions cast upon it. Manners, they say, maketh man; but the probability is that women first made manners.

Mr. Bodley. The last gentleman has spoken well. It has been said that the first part of strength is its chivalry. What does our strong man say?

Ahmed Madralli (the Terrible Turk). I know nothing of the subject, but I am prepared to wrestle with it.

Lord Avebury. The question before the meeting is, Can we improve our manners?

Mr. Charles Manners. On behalf of myself, of my wife Madame MOODY MANNERS, and of my cousin Mr. SANKEY MANNERS, I would emphatically say No. England has the best Manners—the Manners it deserves—and all who visit Drury Lane during the cheap opera and lecture season next summer will know that this is so.

Mr. Andrew Lang. Help! Help!
(*Paralysis of the Company.*)

CHARIVARIA.

THE Russo-Japanese imbroglio still awaits settlement, but in the meantime the difference between Mr. A. B. WALKLEY and Mr. BOURCHIER has been adjusted.

A Port Arthur journal asks, "Would it not be possible to form a Pan-European Union in opposition to the Pan-Asiatic combination? The answer, dear Russia, is in the negative. Still, no harm in asking, of course.

Of pathetic interest is the announcement that the Fat Boy of Peckham's favourite reading is *Evelina*.

The saying that "boys will be boys" is receiving a remarkable confirmation at Drighlington. The Messenger Boy at the Post-office in that town is now aged 82.

To "get even" with his wife, with whom he had quarrelled, a Northampton boot-operative broke up his furniture and set fire to his house. He carried his revenge yet further last week by getting sent to prison for a month.

A number of London clergymen have announced their intention of preaching Early Closing sermons. The idea seems admirable. The average sermon is far too long.

An instance of a lady losing her memory in a train was reported in the papers last week. Such cases are not uncommon. A short time ago a gentleman took from the rack a valuable gold-fitted dressing bag, forgetting he had not brought it with him.

We are informed by the official organ of Emperor JACQUES I. that "before long

the flag of the Sahara will fly from the Atlantic to the Red Sea," but we are not told who will be chasing it.

If war breaks out, the odium will rest with Japan. The Czar will be blameless. He has begged the Japanese in the sacred cause of Peace to give way to him, but Japan has refused.

Ignorance of etiquette sometimes has awkward results. It transpired at the Middlesex Sessions that, when a police officer takes a prisoner from one place to another by train, it is the custom for the police officer, on reaching his destination, to alight first, and for the prisoner to follow him. Owing to inexperience a first offender, in these circumstances, went out by the door on the other side of the carriage, and it took eighteen months to recapture him.

Four hundred and ninety-eight Boers who had declined to accept the terms of peace are now on their way back to South Africa. Mr. DELAREY harangued them for five hours at Ahmednagar, and intimated that he would continue unless they took the oath. They took the oath.

Blackbirds are said to be causing great trouble to the farmers. A proposal that policemen shall be placed at the most dangerous spots is under consideration.

A Belgian *savant* has just published a pamphlet drawing attention to the extreme danger, from a sanitary point of view, of the custom of shaking hands, especially with such persons as surgeons, nurses, hairdressers, sausage-makers, and tripe-merchants. In the case of the tripe-merchants it is even said to be safer to kiss them.

"Joeite" writes to point out that a huge business in skates is done in Norway and Iceland, while the trade in these articles in England is in a notoriously depressed state, and asks whether it is not a fact that the countries he first mentions enjoy Protection.

At the request of Mr. BALFOUR the Canadian Minister for War recently attended a meeting of our Committee of Imperial Defence. We understand that the Colonial Minister is now convinced that we did right in not risking a conflict with the United States over the Alaskan difficulty.

M. RODIN, the new President of the International Society of Artists, is proving himself a not unworthy successor to the late Mr. WHISTLER. Asked what he thought of the position of English art at the present day, he replied, "The exhibition at Burlington



NEEDLESS ALARM.

He. "THE FELLAH ACTUALLY THREATENED TO BLOW MY BWAINS OUT!"

She. "OH, HOW COULD HE? OF COURSE HE WASN'T SERIOUS."

House is unsurpassed anywhere, and I was also delighted with the Wallace Collection." There are no pictures by living English artists at either of these galleries.

There is, by-the-by, an expression, "A RODIN pickle."

As a proof of the thoroughness of the *entente* between France and Great Britain, it is announced that Colonel MARCHAND, of Fashoda fame, intends to marry and settle down.

Curiously, the Colonel's intended wife may be said to be already a Marchande. She is the widow of the former proprietor of the *Magasins du Louvre*.

KING EDWARD has presented to the Royal United Service Institution the State umbrellas used in Court ceremonies by the late King COFFEE and the ex-King PREMPEH. That his MAJESTY should have parted with these in the present weather renders the gift all the more gracious.



Offender (in the course of lengthy explanation). "So I SES TO THE INSPECTOR AS I WERE, AS YOU MIGHT SAY, ILL, AN' DEMANDED TO BE EXAMINED BY DOCTOR JONES, AN' THE INSPECTOR 'E SES AS 'OW I MUST SEE DOCTOR SMITH, THE POLICE DOCTOR. 'No,' I SES, 'YOU MAY RUN ME IN,' I SES, 'BUT YOU AIN'T GOIN' TO MAKE ME CHANGE MY MEDICAL ADVISER!'"

TO HIS MAECENAS.

(By a Brummagem Horace.)

PAUSE, my JOSEPHUS, in your fiscal fray,
And from Imperial cares take holiday;
Quit for one night the crowded platform's glare,
And breathe beneath my roof a purer air;
In short, JOSEPHUS, hearken to my plea,
And, greatly condescending, dine with me.
Expect no luxuries, no dainties rare,
Yet can I offer you Imperial fare.
First—bacon, by Canadian farmers bred
(Canadian "pig," you know, is bounty-fed).
Then shall you feast on true Australian meat,
Newly extracted from its tin retreat.
"Home and Colonial fare;" this truth you teach,
Mine it shall be to practise what you preach.
With this high principle shall all accord:
A little loaf shall deck my modest board
(Need it be said that when that board you grace,
No jam, no pickles there shall find a place?),
No massive silver on the cloth shall gleam,
Tin-plates at present more appropriate seem.
But Bacchus too his genial aid shall lend,
And here again my choice you must commend.
You'd scorn "the foaming grape of Southern France,"
At hock or sherry you would look askance;
A flagon therefore of Australia's best
(Six months in bottle) shall await my guest.
And when the sacred hour is come that claims
Burnt offerings and sacrificial flames,
When—hunger gratified and thirst allayed—
Digestion calls tobacco to her aid,
I'll give you, since I know you love the weed,
A British-made cigar—they're guaranteed.

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE FRONT.

(From a Special Correspondent.)

THE situation looks like war. It looks so much like war that they are often taken for each other.

It is almost impossible to over-estimate the gravity of the situation. But I am doing my best.

A high official, who stands close to the CZAR, and does not wish to stand any closer, made a significant observation to me this evening. "We shall know more by and by," were his remarkable words. They are being widely quoted.

There is no news to-day. But by re-writing my despatches of yesterday, taking care to transpose the words Tokio and St. Petersburg, you will have a column of good, newsy matter for the *Halfpenny Headline*.

Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, saying that the CZAR and the Emperor of JAPAN are planning an Arctic voyage together, are to be received with caution.

"QUIS CUSTODIET, &c.?"—Under the accusing title "A Judge and Drink," the *Cheltenham Chronicle* states that "Sir WILLIAM GRANTHAM has recovered from his indisposition." The paragraph proceeds further, but few will have the heart to read beyond this point.

DEFICIENT LOGIC.—"A Louvain Professor" is quoted by *The Tablet* as having said of the late HERBERT SPENCER, "He was not an original thinker, but he thought he was." Surely, is not SPENCER's own estimate of himself sufficient to establish the fact of his having been "an original thinker?"

Another "White Slave."

FOR SALE (seven miles from Manchester), Good Plain Cook.
Advt. in "*Leicester Daily Post*."



THE MODERN TARQUIN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Tarquinius Superbus . . . RIGHT HON. J-S-PH CH-MB-RL-N.

Messenger . . . MR. J-SSE C-LL-NGS.

First Poppy-Head . . . DUKE OF D-V-NSH-RE.

HISTORICAL NOTE.—An envoy was sent to TARQUINIUS asking what should be done with those who refused to join the League. TARQUINIUS, who was walking in his garden when the messenger arrived, made no reply, but kept striking off the heads of the tallest poppies with his stick.

THE CRITIC OFF THE HEARTH.

(Recast at the Garrick Theatre to suit recent events.)

John Peerybungle . . . Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER.

The Fairy Critic . . . Mr. A. B. WALKLEY.

THE property clock in the corner struck twelve as JOHN ARTHUR PEERYBUNGLE BOURCHIER, the Actor-Manager, sat down by his fireside. If the convulsive little Haymaker at the top of the clock had been armed with the sharpest of scythes, and had cut at every stroke into the Actor-Manager's pockets, he never could have made him feel so uncomfortable as had the author whose cause he had so generously espoused, but whose latest work was now on the eve of production at the Haymarket. It was the Haymaker on the clock that had reminded him of this. Haymaker with scythe being HENRY AUTHUR JONES, with his cutting remarks on the clock,—the clock being, of course, the *Times*.

It was a heart, was the Manager-Actor's, so full of love for his own profession, so bound up and held together by innumerable threads of laudatory remembrance spun from acknowledgments of his own histrionic merits and many qualities of popularity, it was a heart with a head which, when the latter had been lost, would guide him, weak in right, and wrong in writing, into difficulties. Yet quick to perceive where he had made a false move in forbidding his Theatre to the Critic, he would cherish neither passion nor revenge, and would only pray that once again the Critic would return to his desolate Garrick hearth, and the *Times* cease to ignore poor JOHN ARTHUR PEERYBUNGLE BOURCHIER's existence.

Clasping his hands before his face, JOHN PEERYBUNGLE found relief in tears. The Critic off the Hearth came out, Walkleying, into the room, and stood in fairy shape before him.

"I like your playing," said the Voice at this critical moment, "and I say so. Have said so."

"Have said so!" cried PEERYBUNGLE. "True!"

"This was a happy theatre, ARTHUR PEERYBUNGLE," the Voice went on, "until HENRY AUTHUR—"

"JONES," groaned PEERYBUNGLE, wearily.

The Voice ceased.

And while the Actor-Manager, with his head upon his hands, continued to sit meditatively in his chair, the Presence stood beside him; suggesting such reflections that made him regret his actions in the past and dread their consequences in the future. There were sounds of gaiety outside, and a great piece, also by HENRY AUTHUR JONES, was coming over the Haymarket. There the staring figures of the night's

receipts turned upon him, one and all, and seemed to say, "Is this the HENRY AUTHUR who is no longer with you?"

More than once in the long, thoughtful night, the fairies showed him the figure of the *Times* Critic seated in his stall with calm face, unwinking eyes,

Write what you like, sit where you like! only come and see our show! good, kind, charitable gentleman! Let JONES be byjones, I mean byjones! Forget and forgive! Good *Times* come again once more! Forgi-i"

Then all was hushed.



Penitent Arthur Bouchier (John Peerybungle) implores the Good *Times*' Critic Walkley not to desert him but to return to the Hearth at the Garrick Theatre.

"Come back! Come back! Return to your first nights!"

and rigid demeanour, suddenly unbending, smiling, laughing, nay, applauding! Then the vision changed, and the Actor-Manager saw—who was that?—yes, himself, reading a newspaper, with rapturous delight, aloud to his wife and friends, all blessing the name of WALKLEY!

"And this," said the Voice, "might have been!"

The Actor-Manager fell on his knees with hands extended.

"And shall be," cried JOHN ARTHUR PEERYBUNGLE. "Come back! Come back! Return to your first nights!"

He rose up when it was broad day, washed and brushed himself, took down his exemplar of polite epistolary communication, a grammar, and a dictionary of quotations (in case of an inspiration), and indited a letter, a copy of which appeared in the *Times* and other papers of Jan. 14th, signed "ARTHUR BOURCHIER," with, beneath it, "A. B. WALKLEY's" gracious reply.

All's well that ends well. As *Tiny Tim* says to *Terrible Times*, "Bless us all!" And so, let us hope they will live happily ever after.

EMOLLIENTS FOR MILLIONAIRES.

AMERICAN STYLE.

III.

MR. PARTON, secretary to Mr. PONTIUS WATTLE, is discovered at his desk, staring at one of the letters he has just opened. MR. WATTLE enters and surveys MR. PARTON with expectation.

MR. W. Anything new to-day, PARTON?

P. Well, yes, Sir—rather! Biggest thing yet.

MR. W. Out with it, youngster. I mean, you may proceed.

P. It's extraordinary. It's fabulous. It's a letter—O, Sir, can such things be?—a letter from Herr SCHWANGAU, Secretary to the Emperor WILLIAM. He says: "His Majesty the GERMAN EMPEROR commands me to say that if MR. PONTIUS WATTLE is in Potsdam on Tuesday, January 5, His Majesty will be happy to entertain MR. WATTLE at luncheon."

MR. W. PARTON, we grow glorious.

P. It would seem so, Sir.

MR. W. PARTON, this is too good to keep.

P. Your own honours you may be excused for concealing; but for such a combined tribute to self and nation there is only one treatment.

MR. W. And that is—?

P. Publicity.

MR. W. Cautious, though. We must look into this thing. The bag's got several holes, but there's only one right one to let the cat out of.

P. One of Mrs. CAY's young men is waiting to see you, Sir. Perhaps he can help us.

MR. W. What's his line?

PARTON turns over the pages of a little book and then reads, "STANHOPE, PHILIP—Form."

MR. W. Form! That don't mean anything. Must be a misprint. Well, show him in—and, PARTON!

P. Yes, Sir?

MR. W. Guess I'll feel freer to tackle him alone. No offence.

P. Very well, Sir.

PARTON'S exit is followed almost immediately by the entrance of MR. STANHOPE, who is plainly—not very carefully—dressed, and who looks like a man who has the habit of trying not to smile.

MR. W. Morning, Mr. STANHOPE. What's your line?

MR. STANHOPE. May I refresh my memory by looking at Mrs. CAY's little circular? . . . Ah, I have it. My line appears to be Form. Dress, dinner, supper after the theatre, love-making—that sort of thing, don't you know?

MR. W. Invitations—answers to?

MR. S. Precisely.

MR. W. Good, let her go.

MR. S. First, a question or two. Have

you—excuse my directness—ever studied a treatise on etiquette?

MR. W. No.

MR. S. Nor tried to talk like the polished patricians in a play by PINERO?

MR. W. Never heard of him.

MR. S. Ah, you're virgin soil, Mr. WATTLE.

MR. W. Me! Say, that's a good one. Wonder if you know how good that is?

MR. S. Tell me some other time. This is the time for business. And let me say, before you decide to employ me, that it is—what's the formula?—no trouble to show goods.

MR. W. You're the best Mrs. CAY has sent me yet. Some of her chaps—but no matter. . . Let's see, where shall I begin?

MR. WATTLE'S manner becomes violently indifferent as he hands to MR. STANHOPE the Emperor WILLIAM'S invitation, and asks: How shall I answer this?

MR. STANHOPE runs it through half to himself, half aloud, and then says unimpressed: Oh, the usual way. Write to the Secretary, in the third person.

MR. W. But shall I accept?

MR. S. Why, I think I should, if you can conveniently be in Berlin at that time.

MR. W. But I have scruples, Sir, scruples.

MR. S. (smiling). Overcome them.

MR. W. Young man, I was brought up to despise monarchs.

MR. S. Very well, then, decline.

MR. W. But as this invitation is indirectly a compliment to the country of which I have the honour to be a citizen, perhaps a new and higher duty calls upon me to accept.

MR. S. Why on earth do you call it a compliment?

MR. W. Why? . . . Why? . . . Well, of all the cheek!

MR. S. I mean this sort of thing is an old story now. The Emperor WILLIAM has a captain of industry to lunch with him every day, and when he can't get a captain he'll put up with a lieutenant.

MR. W. Not every day? Surely not quite every day? I never saw that in the papers.

MR. S. Of course not. Americans are too retiring to let people know when they lunch with royalty; and the EMPEROR only puts it in the German papers when he doesn't forget his guest's name.

MR. WATTLE, whose face has become more and more austere while MR. STANHOPE has been speaking, now says with dignity: Look here, young man, you may be all right in the home market, but for the export trade I'm afraid your calibre's a little small. When I need advice about tea on the Bowery I'll ask for you. Good-day.

MORE CHAT AT CHATSWORTH.

(By the Author of "Words with Wordsworth," "Harm from Harmsworth," &c., &c.)

[The DUKE is reported to have said to a policeman, who would have kept the crowd at a long distance from His MAJESTY and the other Chatsworth guests, "O 'let 'em all come' and see the sport."]

DURING one of the rehearsals of MR. LEO TREVOR'S play, a sempstress, who was engaged in stitching together two of the back cloths, had the misfortune to slip from the step-ladder on which she was standing, and fall heavily. "What ho, she bumps!" exclaimed the DUKE, and, reassured and sustained by the good humour which these timely words aroused, the sempstress, who was happily unhurt, resumed her work with unabated diligence.

An odd incident occurred during one of the big shoots. On rounding a corner in the three-thousand-acre spinney His MAJESTY and fellow-guests suddenly came upon an elderly beater dressed, although it was a sharp morning, in a complete suit of gold-beater's skin. Directly he saw MR. BALFOUR, who was walking with the guns and munching a biscuit, the man cried out several times in a loud voice, "Your food will cost you more." "Balmy on the free crumpet," was the DUKE'S laconic comment, as he significantly tapped the massive frontal development for which the CAVENDISHES are so famous.

At lunch on the same day the conversation turned on the idiosyncrasies of the guests in regard to the way in which they liked to be helped to the huge baron of beef which, in accordance with the practice prevailing among the upper ten, invariably graces the board on these occasions. After everyone had expressed his or her opinion, appeal was made to the host to state his predilection. "O, just a little bit off the top," was the cheery response of the great Derbyshire magnate.

Golf, as is well known, formed a prominent feature in the pastimes of the Chatsworth week. But none of the press representatives recorded the interesting fact that the DUKE renamed all the principal hazards on the course in honour of the occasion, the most formidable bunker being christened "Joe." When, therefore, MR. BALFOUR carried the hazard with a fine tee shot, the DUKE exclaimed with extraordinary readiness, "Well played, BALFOUR. Glad to see you're 'not for JOE' this time." This happy revival of a mid-Victorian jest so convulsed BEN SATERS, the famous professional, who was partnering the DUKE, that he had to be carried home in a Swedish oven.



WHAT HE WOULD RATHER HAVE EXPRESSED DIFFERENTLY.

Gushing Lady. "Oh BUT, Mr. JONES, I SHOULD LOVE TO BE BEAUTIFUL—EVEN IF FOR ONLY HALF-AN-HOUR!"
 Jones. "Yes; BUT YOU WOULDN'T LIKE THE COMING BACK AGAIN!"

It is universally admitted that vivacity at the breakfast-table is the severest test of a good conscience. From this ordeal the Duke of DEVONSHIRE invariably emerged with the utmost distinction. For example, his favourite mode of saluting his titled guests on their entering the *salle-à-manger*, was, "Good morning. Have you used Peers' soap?"

Finally, when, after the departure of the Royal guests, the house-party were indulging in a game of "I spy," the Duke, emerging from cover during an animated rally, petrified the assembly by daunting Mr. BALFOUR with the gay challenge, "Chase me, ARTHUR!"

A PROTEST.

[A writer in the *Genealogical Magazine* has taken upon himself to fix the order of precedence of the most important cities of the three kingdoms. He assigns the first place to London, having clearly overlooked the claims of a certain burgh in the kingdom of Fife.]

O' a' the havers heard by me—
An' havers I've heard mony—
I doot this last appears to be
About the worst o' ony;
An' when I read yon feckless loon
It puts me on my mettle
To see a place like Lunnon toon
Set up aboon Kingskettle.

What's Lunnon? Fog that fills your
lungs,
An' air ye canna swallow,
An' people speakin' in sic tongues
A body canna follow.
Eh! sic an awccent as they lairn
When schule they have attended,
While here the vera weest bairn
Is easy comprehended.

It's no a hame-like place at a';
It's fu' o' noise an' worry,
An' nae one kens nor cares wha's wha,
An' a' is hurry-scurry.
Ye'll wanner up an' doon the street
Through myriads o' men, Sir,
An' never ken a soul ye meet,
Or meet a soul ye ken, Sir.

How different in bonny Fife!
Here fouks are mair than ciphers;
A man's a man an' life is life
Amang the canny Fifers.
But pit your heid outside the door
Ye'll get some conversation
About the prospects o' a war,
Tariffs or education.

Things bein' sae, a Fifeshire man
Maun aye be, willy-nilly,
Mair highly educated than
Thae fules o' Piccadilly.
Sae I wad ask yon feckless loon
Gin he decides to settle
That Lunnon is the foremaist toon,
Whaur will he pit Kingskettle?

"THE LONG RESULT OF TIME."

"*Tout vient à point pour celui qui sait attendre.*"

[After forty-six years, the Chatham Army and Navy Veterans' Association has obtained for the widow of an Indian Mutiny veteran her husband's share of the Lucknow prize-money.—*Daily Express*.]

THAT the Government does not neglect its executive duties merely because a matter under consideration cannot be disposed of in an instant, is evidenced by the following items of intelligence:—

The Home-Secretary, Mr. ARETAS AKERS DOUGLAS, has intimated his intention to reprieve the convict GUY FAWKES, condemned for an attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament, the sentence to be commuted to one of penal servitude for life. An intimation of the reprieve has been forwarded to the secretary of the extensively signed petition placed before the KING at the time of the prisoner's conviction.

The Secretary for Scotland has ordered a strict enquiry into the alleged massacre at Glencoe.

Mr. BRODRICK, having encountered a report of the severe rule maintained in India by Mr. WARREN HASTINGS, has forwarded a note to that gentleman informing him that unless the rigour of his government be mitigated the Secretary for India will be unable to continue Mr. HASTINGS in his position.

Mr. ALFRED LYTTELTON has intimated to the inhabitants of Boston in America his intention to recommend the immediate repeal of the obnoxious duty on tea.

The Public Prosecutor has received instructions to take proceedings against the Directors of the South Sea Company.

Lord SELBORNE has issued an order reprimanding Admiral Sir FRANCIS DRAKE for temporary neglect of duty in continuing to play bowls after the Spanish fleet had come in sight. The First Lord of the Admiralty adds, however, that he is unable to refrain from congratulating the Admiral on the result of his operations when once they were put in hand.

O. P. GOSSIP.

It is rumoured that among the artistes engaged to appear at the inauguration performance of M. LEBAUDY'S Imperial Theatre will be Madame SAHARA BERNHARDT.

The efforts made by "walking" ladies and gentlemen to effect an adequate recognition of their status in the profession has assumed definite shape. The Theatrical Supernumeraries' Association announces a performance at an early date of Mr. BERNARD SHAW'S *Man and Superman*. It is rumoured that the Marquis of ANGLESEY will take both the title parts.

The plea put forward by the Water Babies that the licence for *Madame Sherry* allows only for consumption "off the premises" is being opposed with the utmost vigour by the Licensed Victuallers.

The report that Mr. TREE refused a part in the same play, on the ground that good wine needs no bush, is wholly without foundation.

BREAKFAST-TABLE PROBLEMS.

(With acknowledgments to the D—ly M—l.)

FOR THE BOARD OF TRADE.

THE distance from London to Dulham Rye is $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and is covered by the lightning expresses of the London and Slackham Railway in eighty-eight minutes, the principal stoppages being between the stations. State whether more important results are likely to flow from electrifying the line or from electrocuting the Directors?

FOR THE BANK CLERK.

If, instead of waiting for a bus at the Marble Arch, you decide to walk along the Edgware Road and it begins to rain, how many buses going the other way will pass you before you are caught up by a bus with a vacant seat inside?

INDUSTRIAL AMENITIES.

If a British workman can lay 500 bricks in eight hours, how long will it take him to heave half a brick at a total stranger?

MATHEMATICAL CRICKET.

If Mr. P. F. WARNER scored 46 in a Test Match, 21 in a match against fifteen of Bendigo, and 38 against eighteen of Woolloomooloo, how many will he make against twenty-two of the Never Never country?

AN EASY ONE FOR HOUSEKEEPERS.

If a herring and a half cost three halfpence, what is the Billingsgate value of a good-sized cachalot?

SIMPLICITY ITSELF.

A stockbroker walking to Brighton at the rate of 3 miles 47 yards an hour, starts from Westminster Bridge at 6.5 A.M. At 6.7 A.M. a stockbroker walking from Brighton to London, at the rate of 2 miles 3 furlongs and 16 yards an hour, leaves the Pavilion. The distance from Brighton to London (and *vice versa*) is 52 miles. After walking 37 minutes the first stockbroker contracts a stitch, which reduces his speed by 14 per cent. After walking an hour the second stockbroker takes a pick-me-up, which accelerates his pace one third for the first eight minutes, one fourth for the second four and a half minutes, and leaves it where it was afterwards. At what point on the road will they meet?

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS.

XXVIII.—THE ANIMAL-LOVERS.

ALL the afternoon the sun has hung a blood-red ball in a sky of leaden grey. Lower and lower it has sunk over the houses, until now it has diffused itself over the western sky in a faint red glow. The lamps are already alight in the little side-street, and shine steadily in the half light; a small boy on a bicycle zig-zags unstably down the middle of the road; a group of vague undefined figures stand conversing outside one of the houses.

I pass on down the street towards the warm glow of a diminutive oil-shop at the further end, faced at the other corner by a little shanty with dirty windows purporting, in shiny white letters, to be "The Ideal Laundry: Gents' shirts and collars dressed and got up equal to new." I cross towards this unique establishment and survey the window show, consisting of a stiff and immaculately white collar on the one side, contrasted on the other with a disreputable strip of limp linen that has apparently been rescued from a street fight. Pinned to the curtains behind is a picture of an immodest infant, delivering itself with a smirk of the outspoken statement:—

ALL MY CLOTHES ARE AT
THE IDEAL LAUNDRY

WHERE YOURS OUGHT TO BE.

I do my best to swallow this indignity, taking so long over it that a towaled lady with a flat-iron appears at the curtain and regards me through it with undisguised suspicion. As I turn away I become conscious of a low sobbing sound proceeding from the other side of the road.

Leaning sideways against the doorway of the illuminated oil-shop, his frame shaken from time to time by a smothered sob, is a man of ruffianly aspect in a dirty muffler. One arm supports him against the door-post, while with the sleeve of the other he wipes the tears from a stubbly cheek. A plump tabby kitten with arched back rubs itself sympathetically between his open legs.

As I approach, an unrestrained fit of sobbing bursts from the figure; I stop short, loth to intrude upon his grief, and glance into the shop, seeking in vain some clue to his trouble. An oil-



UNHAPPY THOUGHT.

Literary Man. "WELL, GOOD-BYE, OLD MAN. I'VE GOT TO GO IN HERE TO BE SHAVED."

His Friend. "SHAVED! WHY, IT'S A PICTURE SHOP!"

Literary Man. "YEE, AND A BARBER'S. I SHALL PROBABLY COME OUT, LIKE MY WORK, ILLUSTRATED WITH CUTS!"

lamp hanging from the ceiling gleams luridly in the centre of the deserted shop; at the back a red-curtained glass door stands half open, affording a partial view of a woman busy with tea-things in the firelight.

Distressfully conscious that I am in the presence of some deep hidden tragedy I turn, with the intention of departing as quietly as possible. At the movement he raises his head, and ceasing his sobs for a moment surveys me with dimmed eyes. Then he speaks:

"Pore lil bloomin' kitten lost 'isself an' can't find 'is bloomin' 'ome, pore lil blighter."

I must admit that for a moment I am at a loss what to do or say. The kitten continues to rub itself against his legs. I pull myself together and feel for my handkerchief.

"Starvin' an' cold," he observes, wiping the tears from his cheek.—"Got a sop o' bread on yer?"

A long and fruitless search in my pockets convinces him that I have not. I express my regret, explaining that I left home in a hurry to-day.

"I'm a lovervanimals," he remarks. "Ever since I left my wife I've bin a lovervanimals."

I stoop hastily and stroke the kitten.

"My wife's conduct," he explains, "in summonsin' me fer 'ittin of 'er destroyed my belief in 'uman nachur. I'm a lovervanimals."

I admit the discretion of this transfer of affection. "They never summons you," I remark sympathetically.

"They're faithful dumb creetchurs," he observes.

I congratulate him on his choice of adjectives.

"I shall 'dopt the pore little blighter," he informs me. "I shall take 'im 'ome. It ain't a pallis, but it's clean an' respectable."

I stoop and reassure the kitten upon these points. My companion's tears have altogether ceased, and he is wreathed in smiles.

"Com 'ere yer bloomin' little blue-eyed blighter," he exclaims, stooping and snapping his fingers. The kitten approaches him sideways with arched back.

The animal-lover secures its back in a clumsy grasp, and lifts it from the ground. The kitten raises a loud yell of pain.

"Orl right," exclaims the animal-lover, holding the vituperative animal at arm's length in the air and surveying it reproachfully. "Wot's the matter with yer? Can't yer see I'm adoptin' of yer? Chuck it, d'y'ear?"

The kitten's language is becoming a disgrace to the neighbourhood: At last the animal-lover withdraws his arm and places his protégé under his coat, where it remains perforce struggling hard and cursing under its breath.

"You're a nice little blighter, you are," observes its guardian indulgently.—"Don't 'arf lay 'is tongue to it, do 'e?"

"Now then," breaks in a voice from behind us,—"*when* you've finished."

We face round in surprise. Standing in the doorway of the oil-shop is a woman of formidable build nursing a baby. She looks squarely at my companion.

"When you've finished," she repeats.

The animal-lover, without relaxing his grasp of the kitten, surveys her for a moment in silence.

"I'm a lovervanimals," he observes.

"What are yer doin' ter that kitten?" demands the lady.

"I'm takin' of it 'ome," he replies. "It's cold an' starvin'."

"Takin' it 'ome, are yer?" demands the lady indignantly.

"It ain't a pallis—" begins the animal-lover.

"Takin' it 'ome!" repeats the lady. "Ho, indeed! An' where do I come in?"

I cannot help thinking this a somewhat forward remark on the lady's part. My companion seems to share my view.

"You ain't cold an' starvin'—" he begins defensively.

"Look 'ere," breaks in the lady, "you just put my kitten down!"

"Your kitten!" exclaims the animal-lover.

"Yes, you jest put it down," replies the lady.

The animal-lover stares at her for a time, but without complying.

"If the kitten's yours," he observes argumentatively, "wot's it doin' outside?"

The lady shifts the baby to one arm.

"Jest put my kitten down," she commands formidably.

The animal-lover regards her for a moment, then lowers the kitten, which, loud-voiced and with uplifted tail, retreats hastily past its owner into the shop. The lady replaces the baby in its former position, and surveys her opponent sideways with triumphantly compressed lips.

"Comin' 'ere interferin' with other people's animals," she observes.

"Wot's the kitten doin' outside?" demands my companion. "That's wot I want to know. You must 'ave bin ill-treatin' of it."

"There'll be some ill-treatin' in a minute," remarks the lady, rocking the baby with determination. "I can tell yer."

"Croolty an' neglect," observes my companion.

"I'll give yer some neglect," says the lady, still rocking the baby, "if yer don't move away from my shop."

The animal-lover turns to me.

"This," he observes solemnly, "is case fer the Serciety Preventin' Croolty Tanimals. This is matter fer th' Inspector."

"P'raps you're the Inspector?" suggests the lady, sarcastically.

The animal-lover regards her with dignity.

"P'raps I am," he observes. "An' p'raps I'm not. Any'ow I've got my eye on you.—Make a note o' the number, Mate."

Carried away by my interest in the situation, I scribble on my shirt-cuff.

"Look 'ere!" cries the lady, shifting her baby to one arm again, "if you don't

move away from my shop I'll show yer the way. And quick. Both of yer."

I suddenly awake to an unpleasant consciousness of the danger of my position. My companion edges away a little from the shop, and I follow suit. So as to be ready to back him up.

"Go on—orf with yer!" commands the lady loudly. "Comin' 'ere interferin' with my kitten. Go on—orf with yer!"

"I shall report this matter," remarks my companion, watching the lady warily, "ter the Serciety preventerootytanimals. I'm a lovervanimals. I—"

"Cat-stealin'!" suddenly exclaims a voice from the road. "That's what they're after, is it!"

I turn and recognise the lady of the Ideal Laundry. She still holds her

ward. "You corl me a medical stoo-dent?" he demands.

"E's the ring-leader," cries the laundress, pointing to me, "im in the bowler 'at. They're vividisectors, that's what they are!"

"Oh the white-livered curs!" cries the enlightened oil-shop lady. "Medical stoo-dents! I've 'eard o' their doin's! Oh the white-livered curs!"

"You corl me a medical stoo-dent?" repeats the outraged animal-lover. "I'm a workin' man, I am, an' I earn my livin'."

"An' we earn our livin'!" cries the oil-shop lady. "And 'ave ter work 'ard for it! We don't want no medical stoo-dents 'ere!"

I hasten to observe that I also earn my living. And not very easily either in these hard times.

"I wish," observes my companion bitterly, "I wish I was your 'usband. I wish I 'ad the 'ittin' of yer."

"You?" screams the oil-shop lady furiously, shifting her baby to her left arm and making a dash at him, "you 'it me? Take that, yer white-livered cur!"

"'Oo yer 'ittin' of?" whines my companion, shielding his head and retreating hastily. "'Oo yer—"

He is interrupted by a rain of blows from his assailant, who, with the baby tucked under one arm, has followed him into the middle of the road.

"I'll teach yer ter come vivisectin' my cats!" she screams. "Take that, yer mangy tike! Take—"

At this point my part as spectator is cut short in the most painfully unexpected

manner by a blow on the back of the neck with a flat-iron.

"We'll teach yer!" screams a strident voice by my ear, "we'll"—(thump!)—"teach yer—"

I have no desire for further tuition.

In barely twenty seconds' time I stand breathless at the top of the street, looking back upon the distance. All is quiet; apparently my companion has drawn the pursuit. The glow has disappeared from the sky, and the little gas-lamps blink in the darkness. Long thoughtful shadows lie upon the road, deepening towards the houses. Peace reigns over the scene.

No Permanent Harm Done.

"In two or three days after taking your pills, my wife was quite well again."



Bob. "COULDN'T I BE THE MOTHER SOMETIMES, INSTEAD OF ALWAYS BEING THE DOCTOR?"

Nellie (scornfully). "HOW COULD YOU BE THE MOTHER WHEN YOU HAVEN'T GOT A LAF?"

flat-iron, which with her bare arms gives her a more formidable appearance than I altogether care for.

"Comin' 'ere," explains the oil-shop lady indignantly, rocking her baby, "tryin' ter make orf with my kitten. I'll soon shew 'em the way."

The Ideal Laundress approaches nearer.

"It's a gang!" she declares with conviction. "I see the taller one, 'im in the bowler 'at, 'angin' about our plice ten minutes ago. I knew 'e wasn't up ter no good. It's a gang."

"Allow me to explain—" I begin.

"Don't you talk ter me!" cries the Ideal Laundress, turning swiftly on me. "I've 'eard all about your sort! You're medical stoo-dents, that's what you are!"

This seems to anger my companion very much. He pushes his way for-